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LET'S GET PERSONAL.

A CUTTING-EDGE CAMPAIGN MAKES CONSUMER RESPONSE EASIER

HEALTH CARE MARKETERS BRING MIRTH TO THEIR MEDICAL MESSAGING

AUTHOR JOSEPH JAFFE URGES CMOs TO START DOING FOR THEMSELVES

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

a magazine for marketers

VOLUME 4
ISSUE 1
MARCH 2008

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If there's one adage

my years in direct marketing have definitely disproven, it's the old saw that talk is cheap.

The high price tag that often comes with communicating with hundreds of thousands of consumers is partly why so many marketers feel the need to say as much as they can for as long as possible. Face it: We're open-mikers, people. Still, there comes a time when we must listen — even if it's just long enough to hear that customers think your pitch sucks.

Of course, if your campaign is strong, you can't wait for feedback. Some companies even encourage it. Take JBG Companies: The real estate developer not only courted real estate brokers with a recent direct mail effort, the company even sent them cell phones so that they could phone in responses (p. 10).

Response is a big problem too for big businesses courting small companies. As we learn in "Small Fortunes" (p. 18), many small businessmen won't bite on pitches out of distrust of big brands.

So sidle closer. Get personal for real. As the toothbrushes on our cover suggest, two-way personal communication gets results. Anything else may have you looking from the outside in.

We're taking our own advice, too, doing more to foster more feedback. To start, we're launching an online poll that asks you to pick your favorite 2007 issue of *Deliver* and tell us why. The first 200 people to submit choices will receive a *Deliver* T-shirt.

This isn't a contest, so the shirts aren't prizes. (Happy now, lawyers?) But they are our way of saying thanks, at least to the first couple hundred of you who take the time to respond.

So after you check out this issue, log onto delivermagazine.com and pick the '07 issue you liked best, and mention why. We promise, it won't cost you a thing.

JUPITER IMAGES/ PORTRAITS BY ROY RITCHIE / PHOTO COMPOSITE BY GECKO IMAGING INC.

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feedback

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The Praising of the Green

> Just wanted to congratulate you on a beautiful job with the "green" issue of *Deliver*! It's awesome: packed with info and oh so bright and compelling. Just great!

— Renee Azoulay, New York

Editor's Note: Look for more eco-friendly coverage in our upcoming issues, beginning with a special "green" package in April.

The Trouble with E-mail

>The November article "Measuring Up" was very timely. In the non-profit world, we often use a lot of e-media (newsletters, e-mails, etc.) because we think it is inexpensive. And I suppose we get what we pay for: We're blocked by spam filters, deleted, ignored, and told to stop pestering people. Turns out that when you couple the time you spend sending it out with the lost opportunities, it is not so cheap after all.

Your magazine is consistently great for getting us to take another look at how we inform our community and market our offerings.

—Beverly J. Babb, Arizona

P.S. I don't think I would have even picked up the magazine had it not been for the great images. Your creative team is excellent!

DELIVER®

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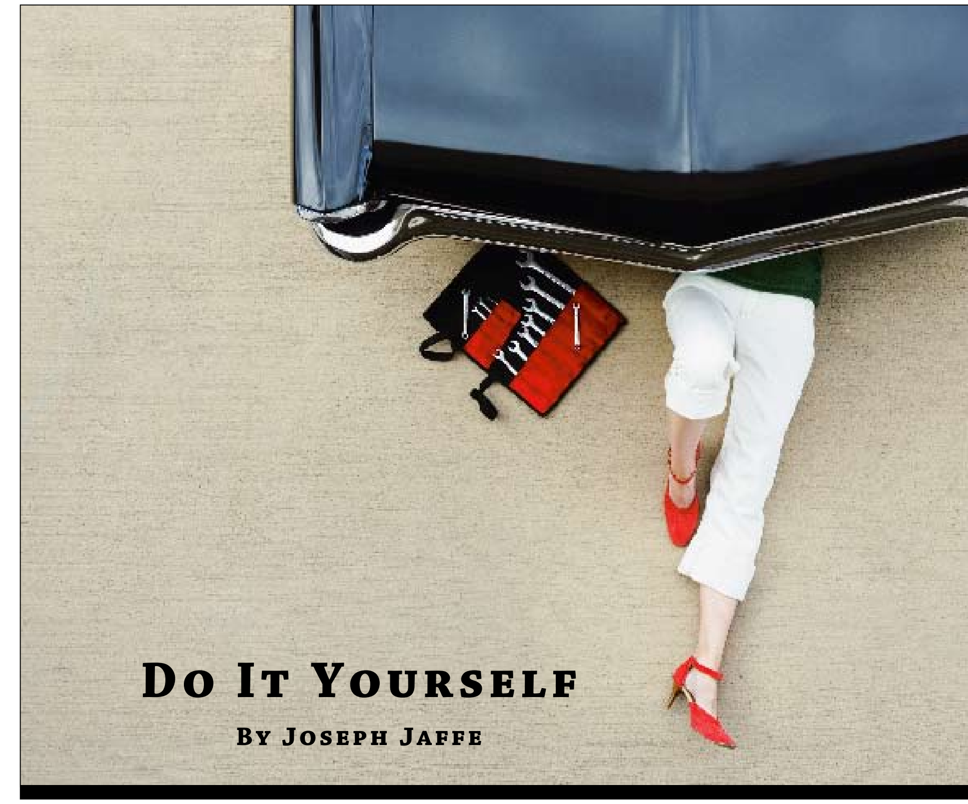


GETTY IMAGES

LEADER COLUMN

Do It Yourself

By Joseph Jaffe

"IT'S NOT IMPORTANT to be the best accountant — but it is important to hire the best accountant."

Those are the words of wisdom from my first boss and mentor some 15 years ago in South Africa.

I've always felt that this advice was consistent with the notion of surrounding oneself with the best and brightest people you can find.

So imagine my disappointment at having to rethink this statement in recent times to be — at best — only partially accurate. In today's marketplace, it's not good enough to entrust others with innovation, change or the future.

Indeed, there is a dearth of talent and visible thought leadership. The leadership void is growing. Meanwhile, change and evolution seem to be gaining momentum and velocity.

On some levels, what we are experiencing in marketing is an extension of Moore's Law. According to Moore's Law, the number of transistors that can be inexpensively placed on an integrated circuit is increasing exponentially, doubling approximately every two years. And if a doubling of speed every two years isn't challenging enough, the cost associated is essentially halving. "Better, cheaper, faster" — some traditional indicators of progress — have never felt so unsettling.

In marketing, it would seem that every two years we experience almost a doubling of new opportunities, technologies, touchpoints or distractions. While many approaches are not very expensive at all (think: blogging), the opportunity cost of doing nothing is skyrocketing.

So what to do about it? One short answer: Experience it for yourselves. I can't tell you how many times I stand up in front of businesspeople and ask the same questions: How many of you subscribe to at least one podcast? How many have spent more than four hours in a virtual world? How many have ever commented on a blog? Usually, I can count the number of people on two hands or less.

Again, not good enough.

To understand your consumers, walk in their proverbial moccasins (or, these days, perhaps I should say mules). To do this, you need to frolic amidst the 70 million blogs and gauge firsthand the power of citizen journalism or consumer-generated content. Want to court influencers? Stop blasting them with form e-mails and start a meaningful conversation.

The path to the future begins with a simple and single action. And it's yours to take if you're up for the challenge.

Find out what's real by carving out a few minutes daily to connect with change. You'll find myriad methods for capitalizing on these trends in surprising ways that will benefit your brand, business and bottom line.

And *that's* something worth taking back to the accountant.

Joseph Jaffe is president and chief interruptor of crayon, an advisory group.

JUPITER IMAGES / RETOUCHING: GECKO IMAGING, INC

Fairytale Ending

An upscale catalog cuts its mailing list — and increases sales

THE STORY BEHIND FAIRYTALE Brownies has all the charm of your classic rags-to-riches yarn: Two friends who first met in kindergarten decide in 1992 to launch a company with little more than a secret family recipe. Eileen Spitalny and David Kravetz bake their first batch of brownies in a kitchen borrowed from a friend, the culinary equivalent of an '80s-era Silicon Valley garage. Sixteen years later, their Phoenix operation is the largest mail-order gourmet brownie company in the United States.

It's the sort of story that inspires others to quit their day jobs and follow their entrepreneurial dreams. So one can hardly blame Spitalny and Kravetz if, along the way, they allowed themselves to get a little overambitious. Four years ago, the company hired an agency to help expand its customer list. On the firm's recommendation, Fairytale Brownies acquired "all these lists," Spitalny says with a sigh. That might've worked with a larger company, but for Fairytale, the strategy was risky.

Problems soon arose in the wake of this daring, unfamiliar new effort. To keep up with its expanding customer list, Fairytale increased its catalog production. By 2004, the catalog's circulation had increased from 600,000 to 1 million. However, response rates and new customer acquisitions were barely enough to recoup the cost of the campaign. Shortly afterward, the brand dissolved its relationship with that particular agency.

The problem the company encountered was a common one among businesses of all sizes: Poor list management. Companies often learn too late that buying lists doesn't automatically guarantee an increase in sales, or even that marketers' messages are reaching the right people, especially if those lists are outdated or filled with the wrong types of consumers. And in many instances, relying on poorly maintained lists can create more problems than a company may anticipate.

In the case of Fairytale Brownies, Spitalny says, the company was swept up by the momentum and excitement of a large campaign. She recalls that many of the lists which the agency urged them to purchase were from compiled lists and trade associations — a list of marketing directors at large companies, for example — with the idea that these professionals would be looking for gifts for their clients. Not a bad idea on paper, perhaps, but in many cases the lists themselves provided no more than a corporate title and an address. Actual names were often missing.

"The strategy [the agency] recommended got more and more aggressive, and we'd always been growing so we were up for it," Spitalny says. "But we went a little too far. We sent out catalogs without a specific name. That doesn't break through the clutter."

Spitalny's company returned to managing its postal list in-house and scaled its list back. Then in 2006, Fairytale hired J. Schmid and Associates, a catalog marketing firm in Mission, Kan., with the hope of growing its list properly. This time, the mail order company was determined to be less reckless.

J. Schmid's plan for Fairytale Brownies was multi-pronged. First, the agency insisted on list hygiene. J. Schmid staff cleaned up any inaccuracies in contact information or faulty assumptions. For example, Fairytale Brownie's internal marketing had previously assumed that a customer file with a name in the company field indicated a commercial customer, whereas customers without a company name were assumed to be private residences. That didn't account for customers who might've ordered a personal gift and had it delivered to their work address.

J. Schmid's second step was to help the brownie company segment its list more effectively by using an enhanced version of RFM, the letters of which refer to how "recently" a customer has made a purchase, the "frequency" of that customer's purchase history and the "monetary" value of those purchases.

J. Schmid enhanced the standard RFM by including two more variables specific to Fairytale Brownies. Steve Trollinger, EVP at J. Schmid, wouldn't share what those variables were: "That's Fairytale's secret sauce." But examples of ways a company like Fairytale Brownies might enhance its RFM include the type of product that a customer purchased and the occasion (whether it's birthday or holiday gift). The resulting segmentation helped the brand determine which customers should receive catalogs more frequently.

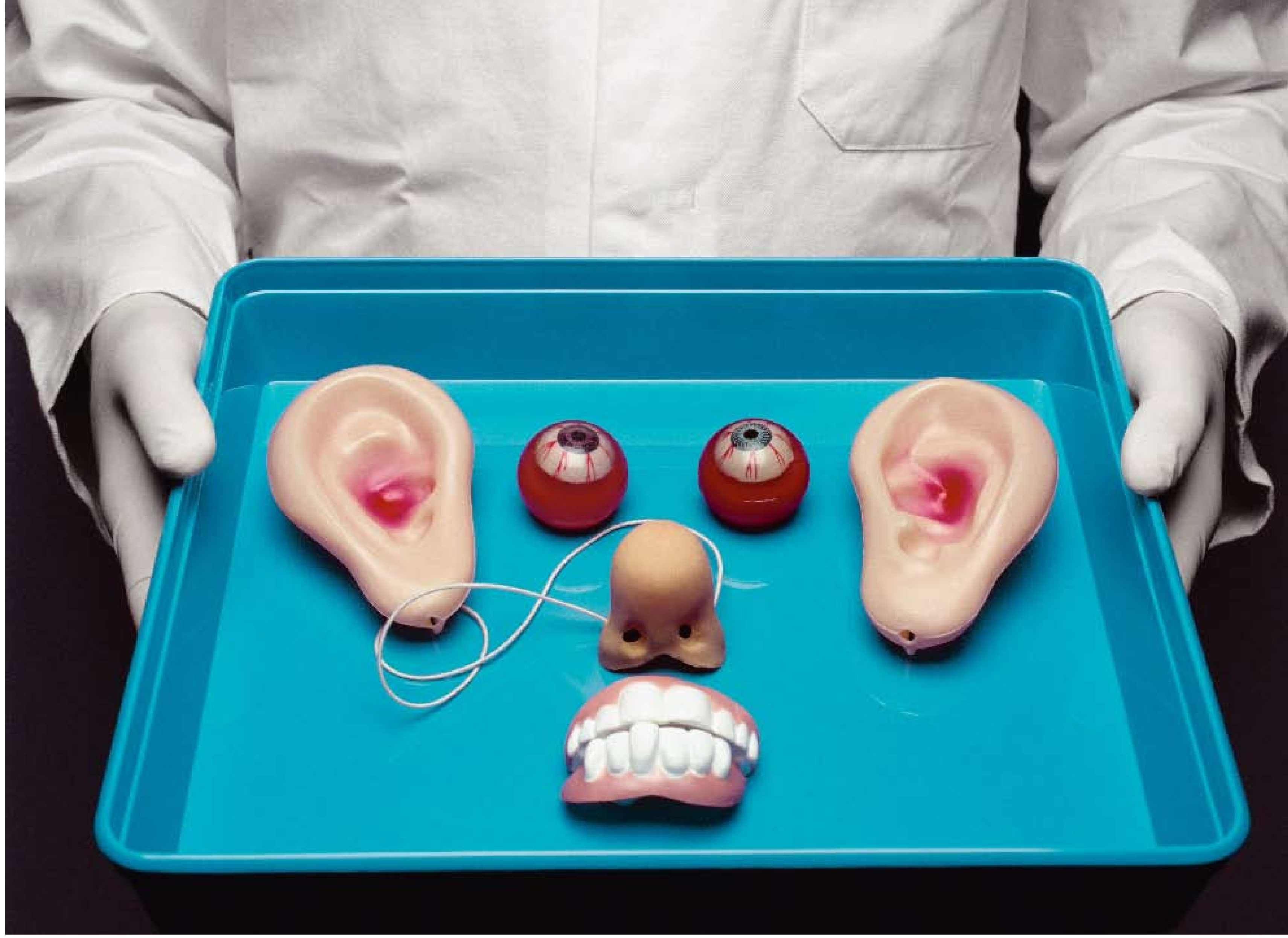
Along the way, something else became obvious to Trollinger — Fairytale Brownies' list was low on upscale customers. At nearly $23 for half a dozen, these are no cheap brownies, and for good reason: They're made with imported Belgian dark chocolate. Testing samples of lists from other high-end catalog companies, Trollinger and his team at J. Schmid helped Fairytale Brownies acquire names of more upscale customers.

They also advised the company to rethink its message and design: In the last year, 90 percent of the catalog's photography was reshot for a more luxurious look, one that would presumably appeal to better-heeled prospects.

Since refining its list management, Fairytale Brownies' catalog circulation has ticked back up to 2 million, but this time the brand is doing far more than breaking even. Its sales have increased 12 percent. That's a pretty sweet deal, at least as far as the brownie maker is concerned. "[Our new agency] obviously knows what works for us," says Spitalny. D

The Best Medicine

In stark contrast to their traditionally sober campaigns, health care providers are now injecting humor into their marketing messages



GETTY IMAGES

Did you hear the one about the doctor and the terminally ill patient?

Probably not. After, all health care is pretty serious business, and humor doesn't mix easily with life-and-death choices and decisions. But some hospitals, clinics and other health care companies are defying that convention by adding a dose of jocularity to their marketing campaigns.

Take St. Mary's Medical Center. Please! [Rimshot]

But seriously folks, St. Mary's recently ran its multimedia "Get In. Get Better. Get Going" campaign in the San Francisco area. The campaign — developed by the hospital's agency, Mortar — touted the facility's faster service, adopting a blithe tone in an often dry marketing landscape. One image, promoting emergency care in under 30 minutes, features a bodybuilder and text from the famous-last-words department: "Spotter? Yeah, like I need a spotter." Another — showing a carton of milk and the query "The expiration date is just a guideline, right?" — tells consumers that they can find a doctor and have an appointment within 48 hours.

The campaign was seen widely on billboards, and it also included a substantial direct mail component: More than 30,000 pieces were sent out to potential patients throughout the metropolitan area, all with the aim of drawing chuckles.

"Humor is tricky, but we thought if it was done in good taste that it would work well," says Ken Steele, president of St. Mary's Medical Center. "The humor also makes something that is very serious — health care — a little more lighthearted." The St. Mary's campaign is all about building brand awareness and keeping the hospital's name in the marketplace, and it seems to have worked in at least one respect: St. Mary's received 100 calls from new patients within six weeks of launching the campaign.

Put On a Happy Face

Why is marketing for something as serious as health care taking the leap from dull to droll? One important reason is that humor puts a human face on what's usually seen as a cold and impersonal business, explains Kathy Klotz-Guest, owner of Powerfully Funny Marketing, which helps businesses improve their marketing and communications through humor.

"Health care ranks just above oil and tobacco in terms of consumer trust and confidence; it's very low," she says. "Health care is usually about being sick, HMOs, 'managed' health care and a lot of red tape. What humor can do is put a human, relatable face on a brand. A big company is hard to navigate, so humor actually personalizes it and gives it a human touch. Humor can also take the sting out of talking about a scary, often daunting subject such as health care."

Another reason for the tonal shift: Humor stands out. "Ninety percent of hospital advertising is [different facilities] saying, 'We really care.' 'No, we care.' 'We care more than you do,'" says Gary Michael, senior vice president of marketing at Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore. "After a while, I think the consumers' eyes glaze over and they think, 'I don't care.'"

To distinguish Mercy from the pack, Michael developed the "Dial a Downtown Doctor" radio campaign to persuade downtown Baltimore workers to visit Mercy rather than suburban doctors. One installment featured a fictive newsman, "Downtown" Dave DeBoy, who loves using alliteration.

"He'd (interview) one person who was 'depressed' because his 'doctor' was out in the suburbs and he had to get into his car and 'drive, drive, drive,' and he was 'detained' behind a 'diesel' and then became 'dyspeptic,'" says Michael. "Then Downtown Dave would say, 'Why didn't he simply walk to Mercy Medical Center?'" The first year of the Downtown Dave spots, Mercy's physician referrals doubled — and the increase has stood.

Go to a Happy Place

Cheerful marketing ploys can also help improve consumers' attitudes toward medical care in general. Too often, when people think of hospitals and doctors' offices, they go to a "bad place," says Steve McKee, president and founder of McKee Wallwork Cleveland.

"With the exception of having a baby, there aren't too many happy occasions that happen in hospitals," says McKee, whose company designed a lighthearted campaign for Presbyterian Healthcare Services in New Mexico. "That makes for an interesting branding challenge because when you are trying to build a brand, it's all about affection. By using humor, we're trying to make people not go to that negative place."

But success demands more than a knock-knock joke tossed into a direct-mail piece. "It always has to be about the message," says Klotz-Guest. "I think one of the reasons why we see a lot of humor fail — and a lot of humor has backfired in health care, by the way — is that it doesn't have a point. When the humor isn't relevant to a customer benefit, it becomes humor for humor's sake that often doesn't work or is quickly forgotten."

In addition, companies need to be careful that their approach does not have a negative framing. For example, Klotz-Guest says, one insurance-plan campaign showed people in serious accidents that had wiped out their savings. One sentence of the campaign's tagline asked readers to reconsider whether they could afford insurance; a second quickly reminded them that they couldn't afford not to have it. "They used a play on words, but it was a horrific scare tactic," Klotz-Guest says.

One approach that seems to work consistently is the use of humor rooted in local experiences. Just as personalized mail gets more attention because it features details specific to targeted consumers, local humor often plays well because its familiar elements let area consumers "in" on the joke.

Consider, for instance, a direct mail postcard from Presbyterian that references a bustling New Mexico state highway: "Making sure 528 is the only congested artery in town." Another Presbyterian postcard targets suburban expansion around Albuquerque: "With growth, come people. With people, come heads. It's pretty simple logic, really. Introducing our new expanded ear, nose and throat services."

Says McKee: "When you can complete the picture, you laugh — [then] we have that common bond that generates affection." D

A clever mail campaign uses a series of packages to encourage prompt response from its targeted audience

BY **VICKI POWERS**

Part of the success of any marketing campaign is making it easy for your prospective customers to respond to your message. Well, imagine receiving a cell phone with the sender's phone number already programmed in. Responding doesn't get much easier than that.

The JBG Companies, a Washington, D.C.–based real estate developer, had the pleasure of reaping the benefits of just such a campaign in 2007: Hoping to garner support for the construction of a 12-story office building in the District, the company targeted major commercial real estate brokers in the area with an elaborate multi-stage direct mail campaign that promoted the potential features and benefits of the building. The campaign culminated with the mailing of orange Motorola cell phones — with the JBG number already encoded — to the brokers, all of whom handle large-tenant leases.

The campaign, which JBG developed with Hirshorn-Zuckerman Design Group (HZDG), turned out to be a bigger hit than many anticipated, as it began drawing notice even from brokers who hadn't been targeted by the effort. By the time it was over the building had won strong approval from the broker community. And the mail campaign, though elaborate, could be credited with having had significant influence.

"When you're really trying to get someone's attention, you need to work harder," Karen Zuckerman, president at HZDG, says of the pricey effort.

The building, designed by the London-based, world-renowned architectural firm Rogers Stirk Harbour & Partners, is expected to fetch some of the highest rents in the city. Moreover, its construction necessitates the demolition of an existing hotel with an enviable occupancy rate, all the more reason JBG felt compelled to woo big brokers.

With a series of sustainability features, the building is expected to promote environmental responsibility and energy efficiency. JBG officials expect the building to earn high praise from environmental activists and gatekeepers, and have repeatedly stressed their desire to minimize the ecological footprint of the construction. This nod to environmental awareness is important in Washington, D.C., according to HZDG, a reality that helped prompt a key message in the cell phone campaign: "Orange is the new green."

"We needed to be sophisticated and smart since the building will have the highest rent in the city when it is ultimately built," says Tamara Dowd, creative director at HZDG.

The campaign team believed that a series of unique "dimensional" objects featured in the mail campaign would be difficult to ignore. Brokers may not take a phone call, went the thinking, but if something arrives in their office, they probably couldn't resist opening the box.

So, beginning in June 2007, the campaign sent glossy, white boxes twice a week for four weeks to 130 real estate brokers in the D.C. area who handle large-tenant leases. The boxes contained an increasingly complex series of objects — from a rubber band to a bunch of toy building blocks — that defined and reflected a different benefit of the proposed building.

Additionally, the items were orange-colored or clear glass as a visual identity linked to the new building: an orange rubber band to illustrate flexibility; a crystal prism to represent clarity; orange building blocks to connote adaptability; an actual orange with an environmental certification sticker on the rind to illustrate the building's green pedigree; and a map of the area printed on Plexiglas. The signature tag line, "Are You In?" was on the printed material that came with each piece.

The JBG campaign began with the mailing of white boxes that held objects such as rubber bands and toy blocks. It culminated with the mailing of cell phones that enabled respondents to opt in quickly.

IMAGES COURTESY HZDG

The campaign team believed that a series of unique "dimensional" objects featured in the mail campaign would be difficult to ignore. Brokers may not take a phone call, went the thinking, but if something arrives in their office, they probably couldn't resist opening the box.

Soon, brokers not initially targeted by the campaign started calling JBG directly asking why they weren't receiving these boxes after talking with colleagues. Buzz spread quickly as brokers anticipated the next box in the eight-part series.

The last delivery in the series trumped them all — the Motorola phone with JBG's phone number plugged right in. Brokers who made the call received another white, glossy box with an invitation to personal luncheon meetings. Forty brokers attended luncheons that ended with a video presentation further promoting the new building.

After attendees left, they received their last box, which contained a silver mp3 player with JBG's logo engraved on the back — and with the video presentation from the luncheon copied onto the playlist. An orange CD also contained the video presentation if people wanted to share it with others.

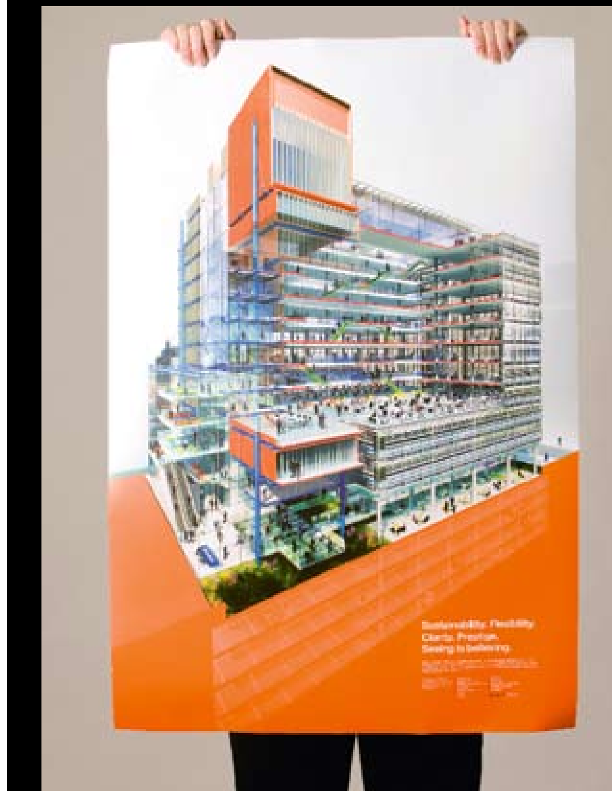
Those are some pretty pricey enticements, to be sure. How can an ad campaign justify sending out cell phones and mp3 players to its target market? Karen Zuckerman, president at HZDG, said the potential payoff from the leasing fees for this high-priced office building more than justify the expense of the campaign.

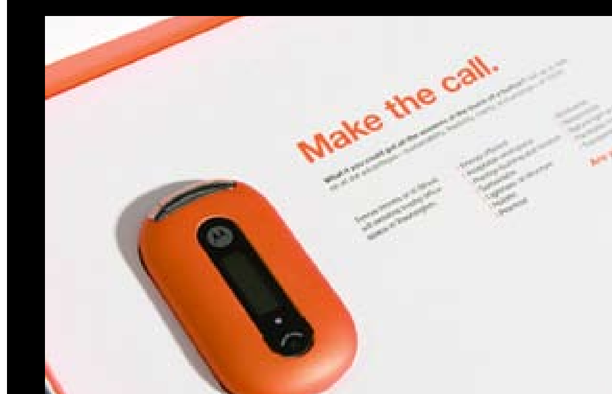
By targeting brokers with these high-ticket packages, Zuckerman says the campaign was actually doing more to touch its target audience than it could have with an expensive full-page newspaper ad that was just as likely to reach non-targets as desired readers.

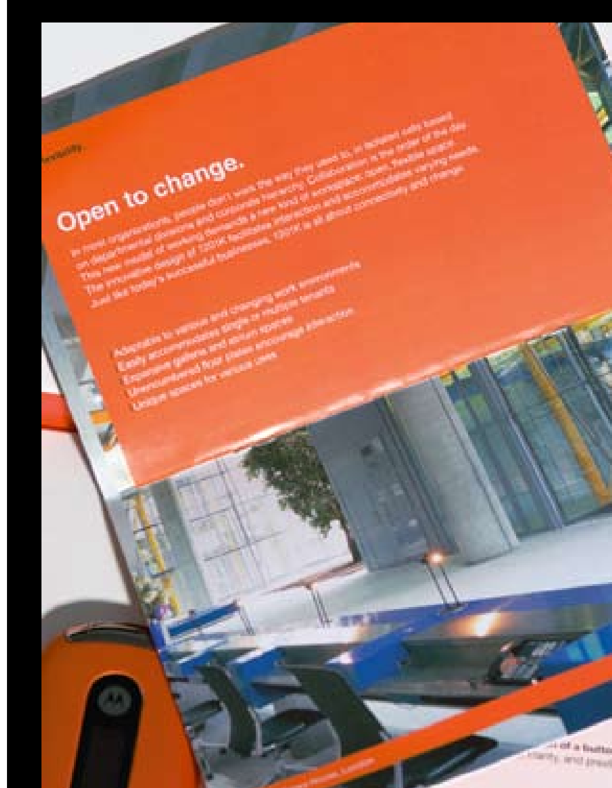
"The client was willing to invest in this campaign and spend the money to do it right," Dowd says. "They wanted to create a great impact."

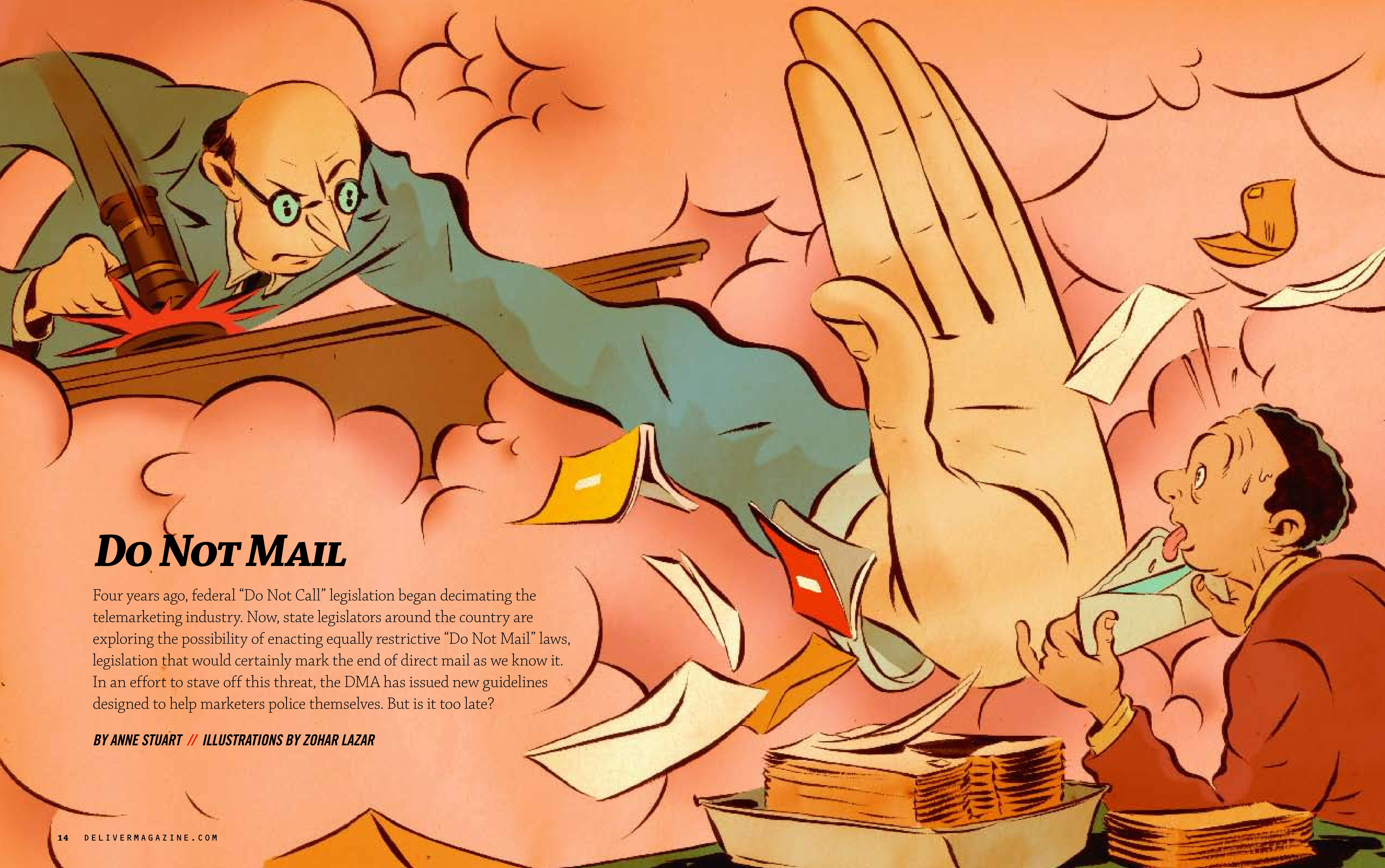
Most of all, the direct mail campaign gained the developer the support that it desired. "The campaign far exceeded our expectations, as the goal was to draw attention to this spectacular building, one that will be truly unique in the Washington, D.C., marketplace," says Matthew Blocher, a senior vice president at JBG Companies.

"This campaign told a story, engaged the recipient, was anticipated, and stood out beyond everything," says Zuckerman. "For us, it was a huge success." D









DO NOT MAIL

Four years ago, federal "Do Not Call" legislation began decimating the telemarketing industry. Now, state legislators around the country are exploring the possibility of enacting equally restrictive "Do Not Mail" laws, legislation that would certainly mark the end of direct mail as we know it. In an effort to stave off this threat, the DMA has issued new guidelines designed to help marketers police themselves. But is it too late?

BY ANNE STUART // ILLUSTRATIONS BY ZOHAR LAZAR

I t's a direct marketer's worst nightmare: state and national registries allowing millions of consumers to opt out of receiving commercial mail. Completely.

"Federal and state regulations — that's scary," says Craig Blake, vice president of sales for W.A. Wilde Co., a direct marketing company based in Holliston, Mass. "I think of the impact of the national 'Do Not Call' registry [the four-year-old federal program that allows consumers to opt out of for-profit telephone solicitations] and how that impacted the telemarketing industry pretty significantly from a sales point of view."

If anything, that's an understatement. The "Do Not Call" registry single-handedly decimated the outgoing-call telemarketing industry. The prospect of a similar cataclysm befalling direct mail chills the spine of almost every marketer. As of this writing, there's no formal legislation to establish a national "Do Not Mail" registry — but there's plenty of activity at the state level.

"The movement is gaining momentum," says Jerry Cerasale, senior vice president of government affairs for the Direct Marketing Association (DMA). In 2006, eight states introduced bills that would have created "Do Not Mail" registries; in 2007, that number rose to 15. At this writing, nine states have already introduced 11 bills preparing "Do Not Mail" registries, Cerasale says, adding that "we expect quite a few more."

Cerasale cites three consumer-perspective factors driving those efforts:

- Annoyance at receiving large amounts of unsolicited mail.
- Concerns that unsolicited mail wastes resources and generates trash.
- Fears — unfounded, Cerasale says — that being on commercial mailing lists increases the threat of identity theft.

Cerasale calls the local Do Not Mail registries too restrictive because they offer just one choice: shutting off all solicitation.

"That creates especially huge issues for new companies," he says. "If there's a 'Do Not Mail' registry and your target customers are on it, you can't reach them. It keeps people from knowing about new businesses even though they might want to."

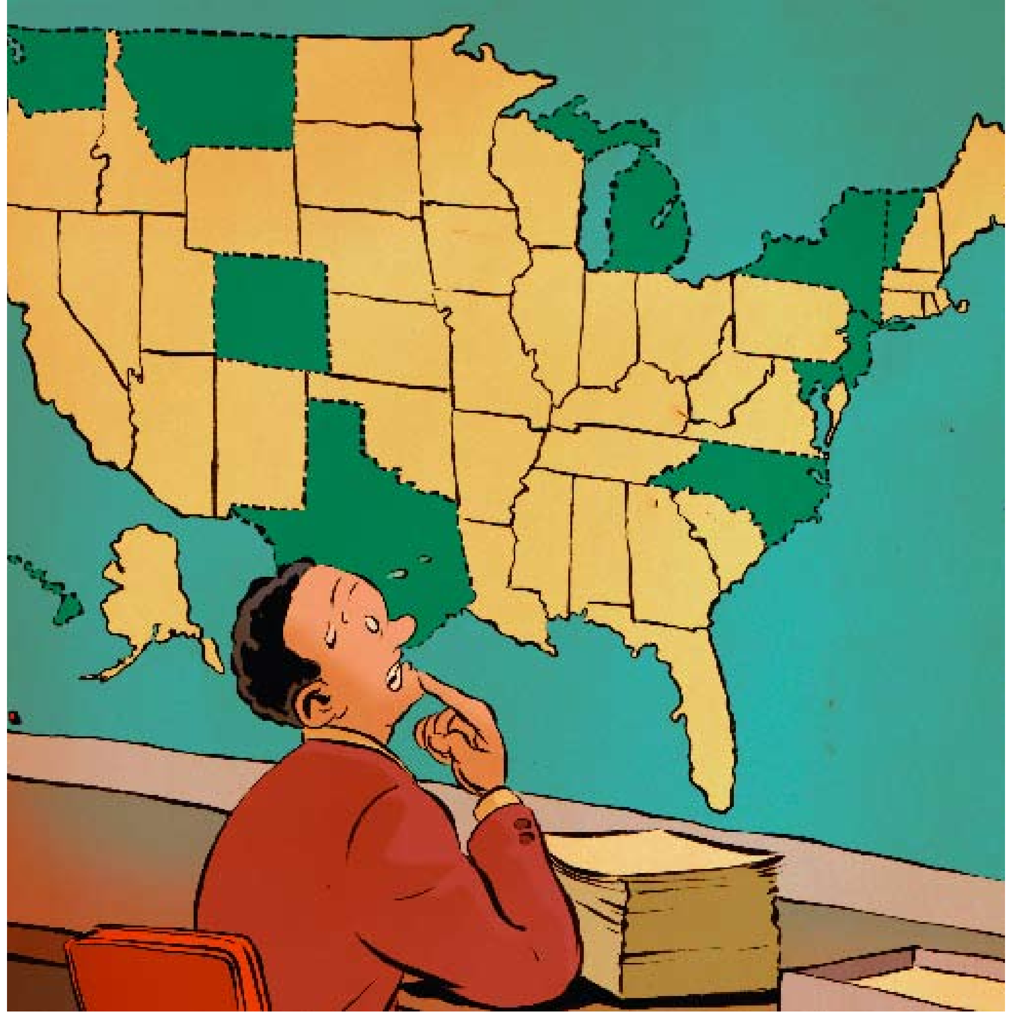
Eliminating mailings could also cause job cuts in related industries, such as paper manufacturing and printing, say opponents of Do Not Mail laws.

How can marketers work locally to help prevent Do Not Mail laws in their home states? Well, says Cerasale, it helps to be as "green" as possible, and to be perceived as such in the marketplace. For instance, one San Francisco retailer doesn't just encourage its customers to recycle its glossy catalogs; instead, the home-goods retailer's Web site steers them to a national database where they can search for the closest recycling center that accepts such direct mail discards.

Second, know who your legislators are, both on the state and national levels, and let them know that you're in their districts. "Invite them to your company, or to your plant, so they can see the economic impact of what you do," says Cerasale. "Make sure they understand how important the mail is to your business — and to your employees who are voters, who are their constituents."

In a major preemptive effort on a national level, the DMA launched its Commitment to Consumer Choice (CCC) initiative last October. According to its mission statement, the CCC initiative is designed to provide consumers with more "choice over the types and volume of mail they receive." The initiative's most significant guideline says that marketers should notify existing and potential customers — on every commercial solicitation — about how to eliminate or modify future mailings.

"One option has to be 'Don't send me any more mail,'" Cerasale says of the notification requirement. "But they can also adjust the frequency or type of contact." For instance, an apparel company might offer its customers the choice between receiving catalogs monthly or only during the winter holidays, or allow them to specify that they want mailings only for outdoor wear or kids' clothes.



The CCC policies say that marketers should also update their mailing lists monthly with the name-removal requests that consumers have filed with the DMA's Mail Preference Service (MPS). And, upon request, they should inform consumers about where they obtained their names.

The big question, of course, is whether marketers will adopt the CCC guidelines. At the moment, the answer seems to be yes. DMA members have no choice: The organization requires them to comply by October 2008. Cerasale says some DMA members are already experimenting with placing notifications on mailed pieces, and some have requested receiving MPS mailing-list updates daily rather than monthly.

Blake says that W.A. Wilde — like many other direct marketers — has always tried to avoid sending mail to people who don't want it. But he praises the CCC guidelines as "a good first attempt" at setting industry-wide standards. "It's an excellent alternative to state and federal regulations." The New England Direct Marketing Association, a 1,000-person trade group that Blake heads, is planning a series of "town meetings" to help its members adjust to the new policies.

"Direct mail is one of the most powerful and most effective selling tools out there," Blake says. "But as a company, you've got to do the right thing. If someone says, 'Do not communicate with me,' you have to respect that." D

Are You Committed to Consumer Choice?

The Direct Marketing Association recently created its Commitment to Consumer Choice (CCC) initiative, which includes issued guidelines for its members to allow consumers the opportunity to customize the amount and type of direct mail they receive.

Among other things, the CCC rules require marketers to:

- Notify existing and potential customers — on every commercial mail piece — about how to eliminate or modify future mailings.
- Upon request, inform consumers about where the company obtained their names and contact information.
- Update their mailing lists monthly, rather than quarterly, with the name-removal requests that consumers have filed with the DMA's Mail Preference Service, honoring those requests within 30 days and maintaining them for three years.
- All current and future DMA members must undergo training on the new policies, and the organization will monitor its membership for compliance. Fully compliant members will receive the DMA "Trusted Marketer" seal for its mailings. While the requirements took effect when announced in October 2007, the DMA has delayed enforcing the notification requirement until October 2008 to give members time to plan for the change.

The number of states considering establishing "Do Not Mail" registries nearly doubled in a single year, from eight in 2006 to 15 in 2007. The following states considered bills to create "Do Not Mail" registries or databases last year: Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut (two bills), Hawaii, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New York (two bills), North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, Washington (two bills)

Source: The Direct Marketing Association

small FORTUNES

Despite their lucrative potential, most small businesses continue to eschew marketing overtures from big companies

BY ELAINE GRANT // PHOTOGRAPH BY DEREK BLAGG

Larry Marion, owner of Triangle Publishing Services, a Massachusetts custom publishing house, has built a career ensuring that his small company meets the needs of the numerous big brands it serves.

But ironically, many big companies don't know how to begin to reach out to small businesses like his. Their worst mistake? Breaking into his day with phone calls. "I just hung up on (a telemarketer) today," carps Marion, his disdain indicative of the ongoing problems big businesses face when trying to market to their smaller counterparts.

In the U.S., there are approximately 20 million sole proprietorships and partnerships and 5.2 million "micro" businesses, defined as companies with four employees or fewer. Small businesses spent $5.09 trillion on goods and services — making them a veritable gold mine for big companies, according to figures gathered by the Small Business Administration's Office of Advocacy in 2001, the last time the agency tracked small business expenditures.

But as for all the lucrative opportunities small businesses present, many major marketers can't even identify these shops, let alone make overtures to them. Even when marketers do discover communications inroads to small businesses, the owners are often either too busy or too cynical — or both — to respond.

In fact, so many obstacles keep small business owners from changing suppliers or adopting new ones that Zach Vetter, vice president at Toronto-based marketing advisory services firm Warrillow & Co.,

refers to the phenomenon as small business "inertia." The chief reason is obvious: Small businesspeople are usually so busy hustling to thrive that they don't think they have time to adopt even some simple marketing measures. In a recent survey, for example, Warrillow found that although 64 percent of small business owners are aware that they can buy keywords, only 9 percent do so. Similarly, of the 92 percent who know about remote access to their business e-mail, only 43 percent do so.

Yet as maddening as the inertia can be, marketers can't stop looking for ways into the small business market.

As every marketer knows, the smaller a company, the more expensive it is to reach them. The market is highly fragmented; small companies typically identify themselves by their industry, not their size, and they are slow to make changes. Furthermore, over the last 18 months, Vetter says, competition has increased for the lower end of the small business market, with more marketers targeting micro businesses. That's smart, he says: "It's very important to get in as early as possible [in a company's lifecycle] and begin to develop a trust-based relationship."

But therein lies a huge challenge. Small companies' resistance to big business sales pitches hasn't changed much in two decades, says John Cicco, who until last year ran Cicco & Associates, a market research firm in Murrysville, Penn. For two decades, Cicco's quarterly survey of small business owners showed that they consistently had what he calls "Goliath phobia" — the fear that large companies would fail to respond effectively to their problems. "Small businesses have a very thin buffer between them and the road, so anything that happens hits them immediately, and they need an immediate response," says Cicco. "So concern about not getting the attention you need is very strong, and this did not weaken in the 20 years we did surveys."

To help large marketers break through entrepreneurs' "inertia," Zach Vetter offers the following suggestions:

• Bundle services together. Give owners their time back by making shopping easy and quick. Bundle your product or service with something the startup entrepreneur must have — for instance, a business checking account. Time-strapped owners respond to one-stop shopping. Great examples include Scotiabank of Canada getting its partners involved in bringing additional offers to the check box. The bank offers new entrepreneurs a "Running Start for Business" package that includes a business checking account, a credit line and a term loan (with fees waived for several months) and business credit card at prime interest for six months. The check provider, Davis + Henderson, furnishes customers with a package of business cards and a logo design at a heavily discounted price. Also included is a complimentary, fully functional accounting software program.

ZACHARY SCOTT

• Honor their fear of commitment. Entrepreneurs are afraid of making mistakes with critical operations; thus, even a relatively small change such as switching accounting software can be difficult. As more companies offer software as a service, smart providers are offering free trials that help ease companies onto their platforms. Once an owner has put her information into, say, a new customer relationship management (CRM) application, it can be more trouble than it's worth to switch suppliers when that free trial ends. "You get a higher barrier to exit," says Vetter.

• Meet them where they live. Many small businesses are intensely local. They are deeply engaged with their communities and generate their best business through word of mouth. Costco's understanding of this phenomenon impresses Vetter. When it opens new stores, he says, the company doesn't rely on TV ads. Instead, he says, "they blitz the surrounding area with feet on the street" — calling directly on some businesses, writing letters to others, promoting the new store at local chambers of commerce and signing up new members.

• Cast a wide net. There is no one rule for reaching the elusive micro business. What works for Costco might not work for a direct marketing company like Vista Print, which keeps its costs low not by targeting its customers but rather "casting a very wide net," says chief marketing officer Janet Holian. While the company employs paid search, it is a heavy user of e-mail marketing, sending millions of offers for free business cards. "A lot of companies' online approach is too focused on search," Holian says. The company also relies on direct mail, sending its own print samples to customers who are reluctant to purchase online. It inserts printed samples and offers in other companies' boxes, too. Unusually, most of its online marketing pays for itself with a new customer's first order, in contrast to the lifetime payback of many traditional direct marketing companies.

To find out how a wireless telecom leader won over small businesses, visit delivermagazine.com.

• Call on the "hand raisers." Self-employed professionals, especially, are hard to find. Stop looking. Instead, make sure you're the first to be found when they search for your product or service, and that your message is instantly compelling. A few years ago, when Palo Alto–based online payroll service Paycycle Inc. was striving to improve conversion of shoppers to buyers, then-new CEO Jim Heeger took a good look at its cluttered, confusing home page. The page failed its key prospects: owners who had just added employees for the first time and entrepreneurs who had been penalized by the IRS for making payroll mistakes. The company streamlined the home page, wrote messaging that promised to solve these problems, added video of customer testimonials to establish credibility, and ensured that new customers would learn the service quickly and easily. Conversions rose from 2.5 percent to almost 3 percent, a significant improvement for a company that now counts 60,000 small business customers.

> IT'S VERY IMPORTANT *to get in [a company's lifecycle] as early as possible and begin to develop a trust-based relationship.*
>
> — ZACH VETTER, VICE PRESIDENT, WARRILLOW & CO.

• Be the first to be found. Improve your organic and paid search engine optimization; it's never been more important, says Vetter. In fact, a recent Warrillow survey indicates that large marketers are shifting some of their budgets to the Internet and to SEO this year. Vetter advises upping 2008 ad budgets by 10 percent and putting a lot of that extra money into search.

• Own their "pain points." When purchasing search terms, don't just buy your category (say, "tax accountants in Brooklyn"). You need to own what Vetter calls the "pain points" — the anxieties that keep owners up at night. In this case, perhaps buying "IRS penalties" and "late taxes" might fit the bill.

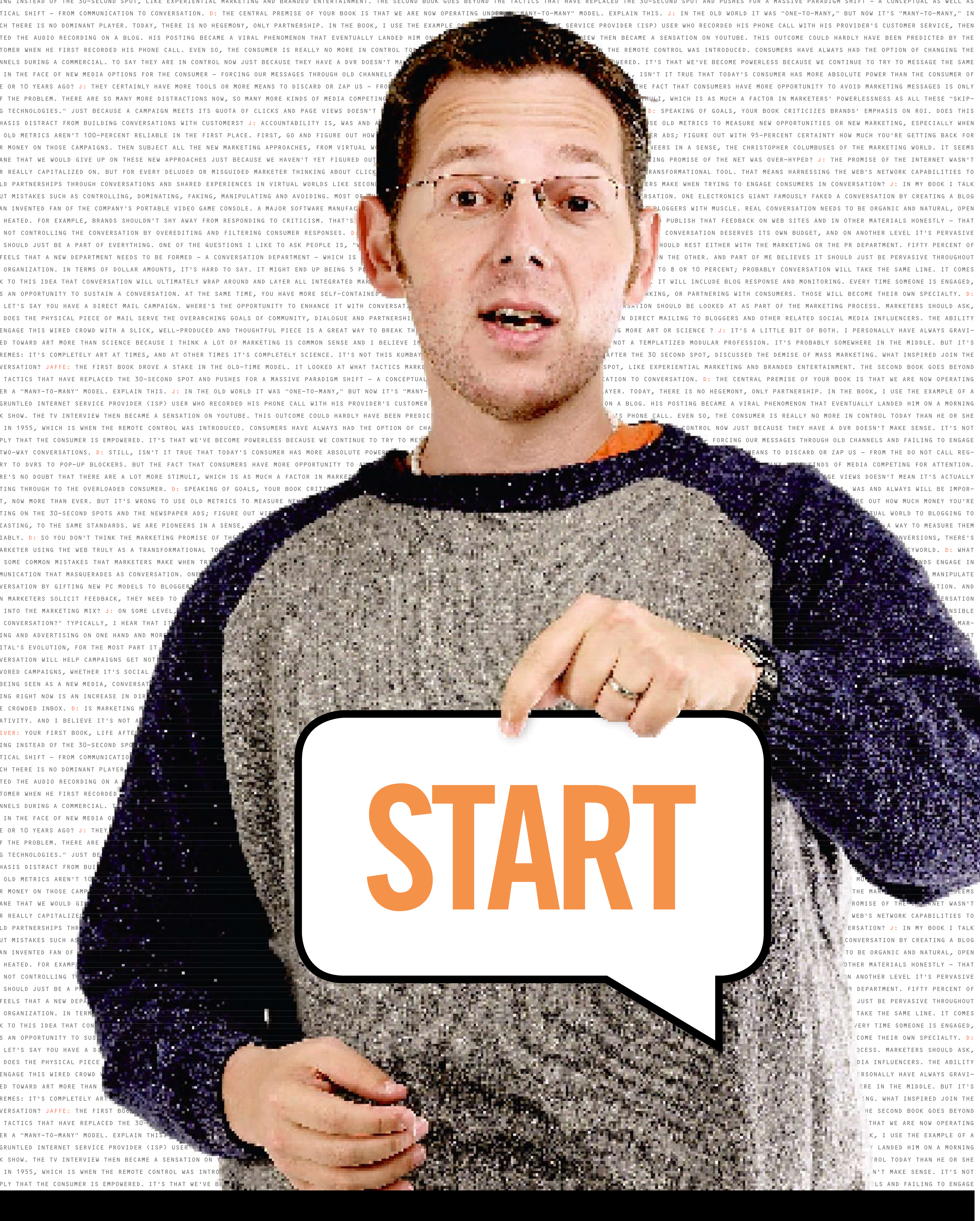
• Finally, respond to entrepreneurs' needs for better cash flow, higher margins, more time, and products that will help them do the same for their own customers. Be aware that they are nervous about switching suppliers and make it easy for them to test without commitment. Provide quality and money-back guarantees, along with responsive customers service. Speed and reliability are key.

Jeff Baker, CEO of Image 4, a trade show display manufacturer and interior branding company in Manchester, N.H., recently responded to a smart campaign by Océ of North America, a multibillion-dollar U.S. subsidiary of the Dutch printer manufacturer Océ. Océ ran ads about a new printer in trade journals. The ads appealed to the common "pain point" felt by small production houses: the need for ever-greater productivity along with high quality at an affordable price. Then, says Baker, Océ mailed out output samples to Image 4. "Within 10 days, a salesman called with full-size production output and an excellent Excel-based ROI calculator," says Baker. The salesman also took an hour to discuss how Image 4 could revamp its production flow to best take advantage of the printer.

In reaching out to a small company, Océ did three things right: It wasted no time getting to its harried customer; it provided substantive ROI and work-flow information designed to solve its potential customers' problems; and a salesman spent considerable time with this 16-person company. The result? Image 4 made a "sizable capital investment," Baker says.

That approach — sophisticated problem solving, attention when it's requested and rapid response — works with even the most cynical of small businesspeople. Take Larry Marion: The Triangle Publishing owner with no time for telemarketers was happy to take a call from a Staples salesman who introduced himself as Marion's new account manager. Although Marion, as owner of a micro business, rarely makes big purchases, he's been buying online from Staples for years — and has earned a reputation as a small business owner worthy of personal attention. Following the phone call, the salesman sent Marion an e-mail complete with coupons — and won more of Marion's business. The "combination of direct mail and personal touch," says Marion, makes Staples "the most effective marketer to small business that I've experienced."

Of course, those coupons didn't hurt. As Marion points out: "Thirty bucks is thirty bucks." D



THE CONVERSATION

In his new book, Joseph Jaffe argues that heated, impassioned conversation is the antidote to consumer disempowerment

BY **SAMAR FARAH**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **JOE VAUGHN**

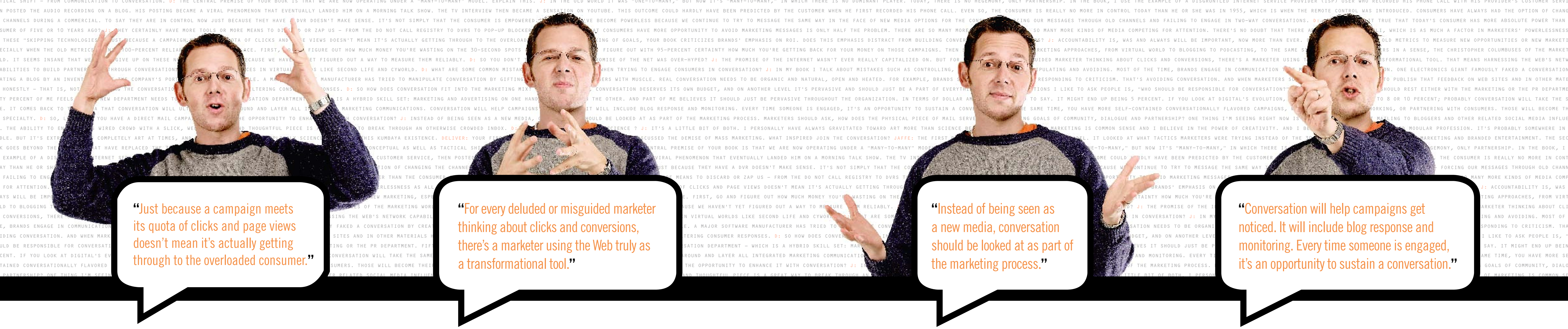
JOSEPH JAFFE IS ALL ABOUT embracing change, anticipating the future, sloughing off the dull skin of marketing convention. His was one of the first voices forecasting the demise of the mass-marketing model. He's a regular blogger and podcaster. And at his strategic advisory group, crayon, he encourages employees to habitually congregate in the virtual world of Second Life. (*Editor's Note*: Jaffe also has a business partnership with *Deliver* magazine, which supports his podcast and offers a branded segment within it.)

Yet, by Jaffe's own admission, there's something very old-fashioned about the central idea behind his latest book, *Join the Conversation*.

Released in October, the book challenges marketers to abandon "communication" as a conceptual framework for reaching their consumers. The problem with most marketing, according to Jaffe, is that it's too often a forced, disingenuous monologue aimed at the consumer. Jaffe envisions this model being replaced by "marketing conversation," an idea that harkens back to the noisy haggling in the rowdy bazaars of Aladdin's day: The futurist takes a cue from the medieval past.

Jaffe argues that conversations — nay, arguments — between merchants and customers in old-world bazaars were authentic in a way that most communication between brands and customers today are not: They were unpredictable and brimming with passionate disagreement and negotiation.

Join the Conversation asks marketers to revive that authenticity on both a macro and micro level. On the one hand, marketing conversation is a new way of conceptualizing the relationship between the brand and a consumer as open, honest and bilateral. On the other hand, it includes the execution of any and all tactics that keep the discussion between a brand and a



consumer alive and honest, from corporate blogging to telephone follow-ups for a direct mail campaign.

Above all, marketing conversation is an art form, according to Jaffe. *Deliver* caught up with the author to discuss a range of issues, including where the future seat of conversational marketing should be in a corporation, why it's not necessarily true that the consumer is in control and why marketing's recent obsession with ROI is misguided.

DELIVER: Your first book, *Life After the 30 Second Spot*, discussed the demise of mass marketing. What inspired *Join the Conversation*?

JAFFE: The first book drove a stake in the old-time model. It looked at what tactics marketers were trying instead of the 30-second spot, like experiential marketing and branded entertainment. The second book goes beyond the tactics that have replaced the 30-second spot and pushes for a massive paradigm shift — a conceptual as well as tactical shift — from communication to conversation.

D: The central premise of your book is that we are now operating under a "many-to-many" model. Explain this.

J: In the old world it was "one-to-many," but now it's "many-to-many," in which there is no dominant player. Today, there is no hegemony, only partnership. In the book, I use the example of a disgruntled Internet service provider (ISP) user who recorded his phone call with his provider's customer service, then posted the audio recording on a blog. His posting became a viral phenomenon that eventually landed him on a morning talk show. The TV interview then became a sensation on YouTube. This outcome could hardly have been predicted by the customer when he first recorded his phone call.

Even so, the consumer is really no more in control today than he or she was in 1955, which is when the remote control was introduced. Consumers have always had the option of changing the channels during a commercial. To say they are in control now just because they have a DVR doesn't make sense. It's not simply that the consumer is empowered. It's that we've become powerless because we continue to try to message the same way in the face of new media options for the consumer — forcing our messages through old channels and failing to engage in two-way conversations.

D: Still, isn't it true that today's consumer has more absolute power than the consumer of five or 10 years ago?

J: They certainly have more tools or more means to discard or zap us — from the Do Not Call registry to DVRs to pop-up blockers. But the fact that consumers have more opportunity to avoid marketing messages is only half the problem. There are so many more distractions now, so many more kinds of media competing for attention.

There's no doubt that there are a lot more stimuli, which is as much a factor in marketers' powerlessness as all these "skipping technologies." Just because a campaign meets its quota of clicks and page views doesn't mean it's actually getting through to the overloaded consumer.

D: Speaking of goals, your book criticizes brands' emphasis on ROI. Does this emphasis distract from building conversations with customers?

J: Accountability is, was and always will be important, now more than ever. But it's wrong to use old metrics to measure new opportunities or new marketing, especially when the old metrics aren't 100-percent reliable in the first place. First, go and figure out how much money you're wasting on the 30-second spots and the newspaper ads; figure out with 95-percent certainty how much you're getting back for your money on those campaigns. Then subject all the new marketing approaches, from virtual world to blogging to podcasting, to the same standards. We are pioneers in a sense, the Christopher Columbuses of the marketing world. It seems insane that we would give up on these new approaches just because we haven't yet figured out a way to measure them reliably.

D: So you don't think the marketing promise of the Net was over-hyped?

J: The promise of the Internet wasn't ever really capitalized on. But for every deluded or misguided marketer thinking about clicks and conversions, there's a marketer using the Web truly as a transformational tool. That means harnessing the Web's network capabilities to build partnerships through conversations and shared experiences in virtual worlds like Second Life and Cyworld.

D: What are some common mistakes that marketers make when trying to engage consumers in conversation?

J: In my book I talk about mistakes such as controlling, dominating, faking, manipulating and avoiding. Most of the time, brands engage in communication that masquerades as conversation. One electronics giant famously faked a conversation by creating a blog by an invented fan of the company's portable video game console. A major software manufacturer has tried to manipulate conversation by gifting new PC models to bloggers with muscle.

Real conversation needs to be organic and natural, open and heated. For example, brands shouldn't shy away from responding to criticism. That's avoiding conversation. And when marketers solicit feedback, they need to publish that feedback on Web sites and in other materials honestly — that is, not controlling the conversation by overediting and filtering consumer responses.

D: So how does conversation fit into the marketing mix?

J: On some level, conversation deserves its own budget, and on another level it's pervasive and should just be a part of everything. One of the questions I like to ask people is, "Who should be responsible for conversation?" Typically, I hear that it should rest either with the marketing or the PR department. Fifty percent of me feels that a new department needs to be formed — a conversation department — which is a hybrid skill set: marketing and advertising on one hand and more PR on the other. And part of me believes it should just be pervasive throughout the organization.

In terms of dollar amounts, it's hard to say. It might end up being 5 percent. If you look at digital's evolution, for the most part it rose to 8 or 10 percent; probably conversation will take the same line. It comes back to this idea that conversation will ultimately wrap around and layer all integrated marketing communications. Conversation will help campaigns get noticed. It will include blog response and monitoring. Every time someone is engaged, it's an opportunity to sustain a conversation. At the same time, you have more self-contained conversationally flavored campaigns, whether it's social networking, or partnering with consumers. Those will become their own specialty.

D: So, let's say you have a direct mail campaign. Where's the opportunity to enhance it with conversation?

J: Instead of being seen as a new media, conversation should be looked at as part of the marketing process. Marketers should ask, How does the physical piece of mail serve the overarching goals of community, dialogue and partnership? One thing I'm seeing right now is an increase in direct mailing to bloggers and other related social media influencers. The ability to engage this wired crowd with a slick, well-produced and thoughtful piece is a great way to break through an otherwise crowded inbox.

D: Is marketing more art or science ?

J: It's a little bit of both. I personally have always gravitated toward art more than science because I think a lot of marketing is common sense and I believe in the power of creativity. And I believe it's not a templatized modular profession. It's probably somewhere in the middle. But it's extremes: it's completely art at times, and at other times it's completely science. It's not this Kumbaya existence. D

A Fresh Take

A new twist on direct mail coupons sweetens the pot for incentive programs

After the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, many of New Orleans' businesses struggled to get back on their feet. Bruce Frommeyer — who owns eight Subway® Restaurants in the area — was able to get up and going faster than many, thanks partially to a high-tech twist on a vintage incentive: direct mail coupons.

"After we got back online, we needed something to supplement Subway's corporate advertising," he says. "I've tried fliers in marriage mail, newspaper ads and inserts, but all these things don't let you target one store. And that's the key to my business right now. I need to bring it down to the neighborhood level."

Fortunately for Frommeyer, Subway Restaurants had recently teamed with Database Marketing Group (DMG) to offer a systemwide program that allows the owners to go online and customize individualized mailings that can saturate every nearby consumer — whether they are at home or at work. Franchise owners can send coupon posters to local businesses, which are posted in lunchrooms for access by all employees.

"The fast food category has historically been mass-media driven, but like most other retail industries, there's been a significant shift toward direct mail," says Kurt Whitmer, executive vice president of DMG. "With the introduction of TIVO and DVR technology and increasingly less effective mass media, fast food restaurants are looking for cost-effective solutions that allow them to saturate their individual neighborhoods."

Until now, the direct mail process for individual fast food outlets was widely criticized as laborious and inefficient. "You had to get all of the franchisees to submit manual orders," recalls Whitmer. "You had to get everybody in line to print and mail together. You had to get everybody synced up. It was like herding cats."

PAPER CONSTRUCTION BY MATTHEW SPORZYNSKI

To achieve the economies of scale, the franchises all had to adopt the same offers, mail dates and creative. Such hurdles made some campaigns more trouble than they were worth to many franchise owners.

The DMG system provides a 24/7 online ordering function that uses variable data printing (VDP) for small quantity, weekly production dates. Storeowners can log on, customize their mailing and mail any week they choose. They can customize everything from the offer itself to the hours, map, phone number and location-specific benefits.

DMG, working with various Subway marketing departments, makes several different mailer "shells" available, but franchisees can customize their offer to their needs and neighborhood.

"The 'Southwest' sandwich may not resonate in Manhattan, but it will work well in San Diego and Phoenix," says Whitmer.

Franchise owners can also specify exactly which consumers they want to reach: families with children, new movers, young adults, seniors or all households within the appropriate mailing radius for each location. And when mailing to businesses, franchises can target all the way down to a specific office building, block or neighborhood.

Bruce Frommeyer says customization has been a major reason for his stores' resurrection. "The great thing about the system is that I can actually make the mailing area as small or as large as I want," he says. "I can select an increasingly larger or smaller radius, and the system will tell me the number that's available to mail to in that region."

That selectivity makes this direct mail program a lot more useful than ads in local newspapers, Frommeyer says. "If I buy a newspaper ad for $1,200, it covers an area with 20 other Subways," he reasons. "Now I can spend that same $1,200 on mail and target residential or commercial, whatever I want."

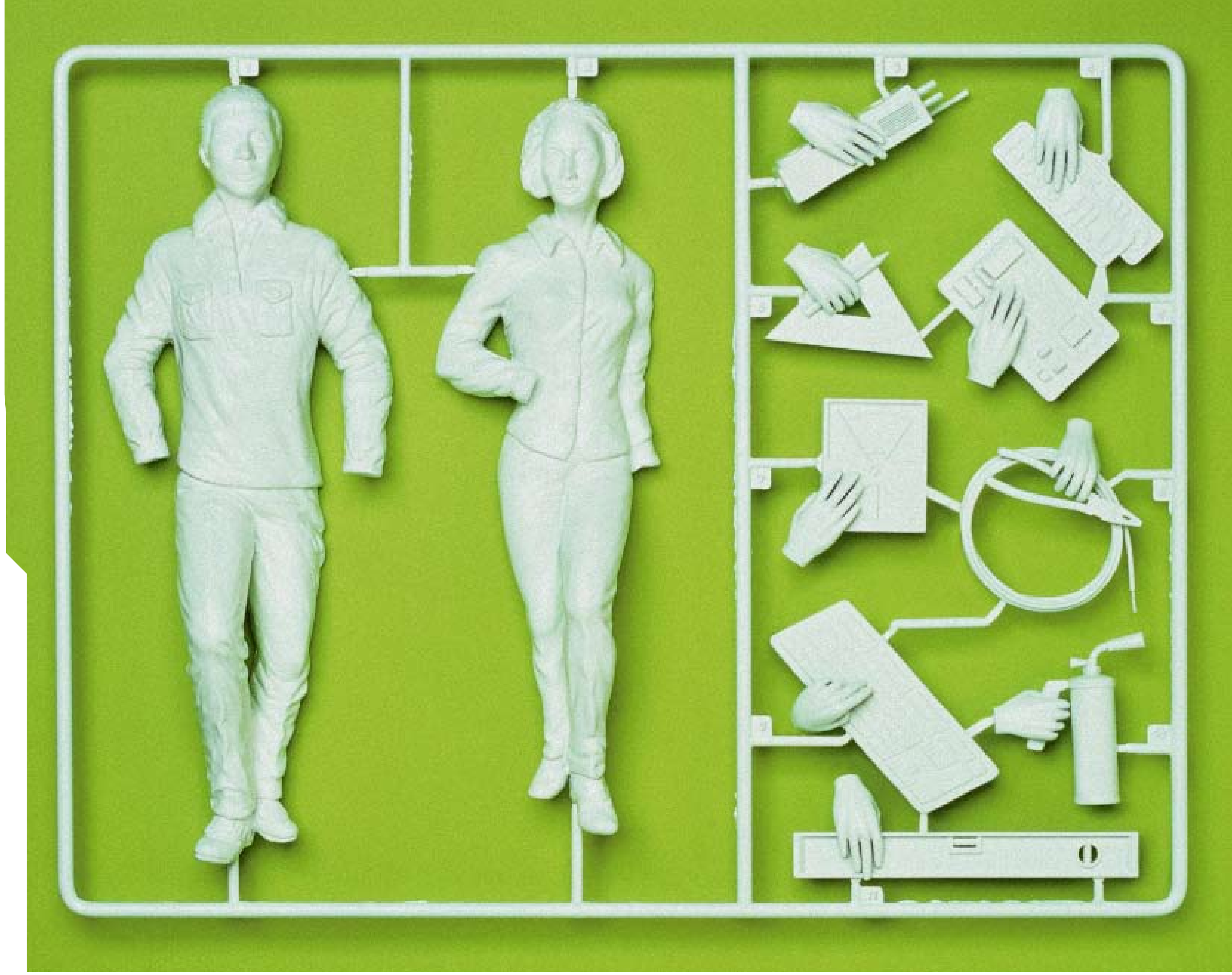
The overall result is that, while the actual size of the mailings is smaller, the overall efficiency is significantly higher. "There's a lot less waste and you don't have to spend a lot of time or money to get outstanding results," says Whitmer. "Several of our fast food clients have documented redemptions higher than any other media they've tried."

He adds that store owners, always looking for the most effective ways to get even the slightest bump up in their ROI, get a lot more information about the effectiveness of their individual campaigns. "They can calculate, 'For every dollar I invest, I get X amount in return'," says Whitmer. "When you run a radio or a TV spot, you usually can't quantify the response and sales lift. But with mail, you can tell exactly which consumers came in, how much they spent and how far they traveled."

Bruce Frommeyer, for one, is thankful for the reach and immediacy of the Subway Restaurants coupon program. "If I had had this back in the beginning," he says, "it would have been my primary form of advertising." D

Building Character

Are focus groups a thing of the past? For a growing number of marketers, the answer is yes. Will "personas" take their place?



MASTERFILE

Focus groups have been a staple of marketing research for decades, but Rodger Roeser, president of Eisen Management Group, thinks they're a mistake for modern marketers. "Focus groups take edgy ideas, or things that might have an impact, and they round off the corners," he says. The result: Your brand gets watered down as you to try to make it all things to all people.

To keep your brand strong, you might consider flipping the focus group strategy on its head by replacing it with a "marketing persona." A persona is a detailed representation of your company's perfect customer, an archetype that embodies everything you want your brand to represent. When creating a persona, you'll choose a gender, an age, an occupation, a living situation, a name and so forth. Think of it as a fictional ideal customer. The process is akin to an author creating the main character in a novel: You're putting a face on the person who will buy what you're selling.

"When we create the persona, that creates our pathway — our bull's-eye — that leads the entire campaign," says Sarah Biondi, an account supervisor at the marketing firm McKee Wallwork Cleveland.

The key to a successful persona is focus. "When we start working with a client," says Biondi, "we ask who their target customer is, and they say things like 'everyone' or 'all men.' But if you aim at everyone, your message isn't going to be effective. By aiming at a small group, you can make the messages relevant — and there will always be bleed-through and crossover." Rather than casting the widest net possible and risk alienating core customers, personas help focus marketing on keeping that core group happy.

The Taos Ski Valley resort, for example, has a very specific customer that it tries to attract: The resort has more than 50 percent expert trails and none of the glitz that defines some other ski areas. This year, the resort will open to snowboarders for the first time ever, but that doesn't change what Taos wants to sell — the pure alpine experience.

This clearly defined goal led McKee Wallwork Cleveland to help Taos develop a persona dubbed "The True Skier." Says Sarah Biondi, "He has hat (hair) and a raccoon tan at the end of the day because he's so focused on skiing. He's not into off-mountain amenities like spas; he's there for the sport." Taos hopes the approach wins over a larger percentage of the 6.4 million alpine skiers nationwide.

Personas can also drive the development of the brand itself. For example, when Dr. Krane's KoolLips cold-sore treatment was first introduced, the product had a bland, folksy look. John Hiebert, president and CEO of Taiga Bioactives, says that when the company created the brand, it was focused on the natural ingredients within the product rather than who would actually buy it.

"We didn't know our audience, other than the human population," he says. "We needed to find out who our target was, then do a total rebrand."

Hiebert worked with Roeser and EMG to develop the target market and determine what kind of person would be a brand champion for Dr. Krane's KoolLips. They named the archetype "Laura." Says Roeser, "Laura's a 36-year-old who drives a Lexus. She has no kids. She's a married businesswoman and a hard worker, and her favorite activities are gardening and cooking outdoors."

"Laura" is a distillation of marketing research, a persona, a representation of an audience at which Taiga Bioactives will direct its marketing efforts. Instead of marketing to a nebulous category of 36- to 44-year-old female college grads, Dr. Krane's packaging and marketing are designed to appeal to Laura. "Everything we do, we say 'Would Laura go to this event? Would she buy this laundry detergent?' We don't sponsor parenting programs because Laura has no kids," says Roeser.

In addition to organizing events to attract Lauras, Roeser and his staff designed sample packs about the size of a matchbook. "When you open one of them, you find a foil pouch with a sample of the product," he says. Dr. Krane's is mailing these product samples out to various Lauras in a range of designated marketing areas. The firm knowledge of who Laura is made it clear to Roeser that she would definitely want to try the product before buying.

Hiebert says that initially he "didn't see the benefit" of the persona exercise, but learned better after attending a Winnipeg Girls Night Out event that debuted the new Dr. Krane look — an event that would appeal to "Laura."

"The look is contemporary and in fashion," he says, talking about the copper and cool purple logo on a black background, bordered by a striking font that's both a throwback to the Roaring 20s and a look to the future. "Customers tuned in to the graphics and colors and took ownership of it. They were saying that they're the ones who buy this." D

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROY RITCHIE

Courting Fan Mail

THESE DAYS, the University of Alabama's direct mail campaigns for our athletic department are earning an A+.

In the past, the grade was not nearly as high. For years, the Alabama athletic department used the old dinosaur method of direct mail for our season ticket renewals for Crimson Tide football and basketball; we mail you the form and you send it back ... with very little pizzazz. The direct mail piece yielded acceptable results, yet it offered very little information about how the consumer was interacting with the brand.

With this in mind, we created in 2007 a personalized direct mail campaign with an Internet component. Season ticketholders were sent a postcard with a picture of Bryant-Denny Stadium (home of the Crimson Tide) and their names were spelled out on the field by our band. The mailers also included a PURL address with the season ticketholder's name in it. Site visitors saw images of Bryant-Denny Stadium with their name spelled out by the band and our varsity cheerleaders holding a sign up with the ticketholder's name — "J-O-N G-I-L-B-E-R-T, it's your day at Bryant-Denny Stadium!"

The campaign was a success. Season ticketholders renewing online more than doubled, saving the ticket office valuable time and resources in processing mailed-in renewals. And we sold approximately $50,000 in personalized Bryant-Denny Stadium posters. Perhaps most important, the direct mail, with the PURL sites, enabled us to track results and learn more about our fan base. We've begun a new direct mail piece with the Crimson Tide Foundation, the athletic department's non-profit arm. The campaign helped generate more than $300,000 in revenue in its first six months.

The Tide is rolling with personalized direct mail. D